

After losing contact for several days in October, XMM-Newton is talking once again, and observations have resumed. The failure of an onboard radio frequency switch during routine operations is believed to be the cause, and ground teams re-established contact after sending a command that allowed the switch to return to its last working position. Since this occurred near XMM-Newton's closest approach with Earth, all of the instruments had been stowed, per standard procedure. All instruments are working properly, and communication with ground stations has returned to normal.

The latest version of the Science Analysis System (SAS), v. 8.0.0, was released in July 2008; its patch, v. 8.0.1, was released in October. These fix several minor bugs from previous versions, as well as allow the merging of spectra from different RGS instruments, something that no other spectral analysis package does to date. Also, there are now new tasks to extract point sources, and to extract and fit a source's radial profile. (These tasks are experimental, and users are asked to inform the XMM-Newton Science Operations Centre if they find bugs or have suggestions for improvement.)

The Eighth Call for Proposals for XMM-Newton was made on August 26; the final day to submit a proposal was October 10. Results from the first round of reviews are expected in December 2008/January 2009, and successful proposals will enter the Budget Process in early spring 2009. Accepted proposals can be found online at [http://xmm.esac.esa.int/external/xmm\\_news/otac\\_results/index.shtml](http://xmm.esac.esa.int/external/xmm_news/otac_results/index.shtml).

The XMM-Newton Science Operations Centre has organized a workshop for May 18-20, 2009, in Madrid, Spain, entitled "Supersoft X-ray Sources - New Developments". The goal of the workshop is to review the current status of observational and theoretical research on supersoft X-ray sources and identify the most important unresolved problems.

For more information about XMM-Newton, please visit the US Guest Observer Facility pages at <http://xmm.gsfc.nasa.gov/>.